

Senator Warren and Representative Levin Introduce Legislation That Would Establish a National Contact Tracing Program including UIOs

Category: Policy Blog

written by NCUIH | May 18, 2020

On Thursday, May 14, 2020, Senator Elizabeth Warren (D-Mass) and Representative Andy Levin (D-Mich) introduced the Coronavirus Containment Corps Act. The Coronavirus Containment Corps Act was co-sponsored by Sens. [Tina Smith](#) (D-Minn.) and [Jeff Merkley](#) (D-Ore.). The legislation would establish a federal coronavirus contact tracing program. Sen. Warren and Rep. Levin would like the legislation to be incorporated into any future coronavirus relief packages.

The bill would require the Center for Disease Control (CDC) to develop a national strategy for coronavirus contact tracing within 21 days after coordinating with state, local, and Tribal health officials. The bill would require the Director of the CDC to coordinate with the Director of the Indian Health Service (IHS) to ensure the contact tracing needs of Indian Tribes are met. The legislation would provide states and Tribes with \$10 billion for hiring contact tracers and other staff. It would also provide states and Tribes with \$500 million to find those who have lost their jobs during the coronavirus and prioritize their hiring as contact tracers. In addition, the legislation will ensure patient privacy by requiring the CDC to anonymize data, automatically delete patient data, and prohibit data-sharing within the federal government except within the CDC and IHS. Tribal health data sovereignty would also be protected by the proposed legislation.

The bill also provides grants to Indian Tribes, Tribal organizations, Alaska Native entities, Indian controlled organizations serving Indians, Urban Indian organizations, or Native Hawaiian organizations. The purpose of these grants will be the recruitment, placement, and training of individuals seeking employment in contact tracing and related positions.

Contact tracing will help mitigate the transmission of COVID-19 by identifying all individuals who have been in contact with someone who tested positive with coronavirus. These potentially infected individuals are then tested for coronavirus and encouraged to quarantine if they test positive.

The Coronavirus Containment Corps Act would be a significant step forward in ensuring the health of the American Indian/Alaska Native (AI/AN) Population during this pandemic. The legislation also helps Urban Indian Organizations by making them eligible for grants to promote job opportunities for Urban Indians as contact tracers.

- [Read More](#)
- [Statement From Senator Warren's Office](#)
- [Coronavirus Containment Corps Act Text](#)